

FLORA CLUSTON HOUSE  
North Side of Route 684, approx. 775 feet  
east of Jay Street Bridge  
Lockport Vicinity  
Clinton County  
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-5533

HABS  
PA  
18-LOKPT.V,  
7-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Mid-Atlantic Region  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HABS  
PA  
18-LOKPTV,  
7-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FLORA CLUSTON HOUSE

HABS No. PA-5533

**Location:** North side of Route 664, approximately 775 feet east of the Jay Street Bridge, ~~Lower Lockport, Lock Haven~~ Vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 18. 295300. 4556980

**Present Owner:** Frank D. and Susan M. Pokorney  
R.D. #2, Box 79  
Lock Haven, PA 17745

**Present Occupant:** Mrs. Penny Garverick, tenant

**Present Use:** Residence.

**Significance:** The early-twentieth-century Flora Cluston House is significant as an intact example of an urban rowhouse form within the nineteenth-century vernacular canal-era housing of Lower Lockport. As a collection, the canal-era houses share similar two-story, side-gabled massing and a uniform setback from the road. They also exhibit simple design and minimal ornamental detailing. The Flora Cluston House also has an unadorned design, but differs from the canal-era houses in its massing and form. The house is also distinguished by its Colonial Revival style porch details, including columns, pilasters, and a decorative frieze. The Flora Cluston House, unique in Lower Lockport, was built by Alexander Probst, circa 1914. Initially, the house was a rental property and the tenants are unknown. Flora Cluston purchased the property in 1933 and was the first owner/resident.

Lower Lockport's development followed a local pattern of early nineteenth-century agricultural land use yielding to residential subdivision in the wake of the development of the West Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal in 1834. Lock No. 34 of the canal system was sited in Lower Lockport in 1834 and the canal remained in operation until 1889, at which time it was rendered useless by a damaging flood (see HAER No. PA-188). The canal served as a major transportation route in the pre-railroad era. In conjunction with the canal, the lumber industry also played a major role in the development of Lower Lockport and was central to its economy. Lower Lockport served as the head market for the lumber rafting trade on the West Branch. Many of the extant dwellings in Lower Lockport housed merchants and skilled professionals--blacksmiths and carpenters--dependent upon the lumber trade. Other residents included relatively prosperous boatmen and laborers who worked on the canal. Alexander Probst, the builder and initial owner of the Flora Cluston House, was a carpenter.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: circa 1914.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description from the most recent deed: Beginning at an iron pin in the Southwest corner of the land herein described, said iron pin being fifty and nine-tenths (50.9) feet Southeast of the intersection of the back edge of a three (3) foot concrete walk with the center line of township Route #400, said iron pin also being at the point of intersection of the center line of said Route #400 with the northern line of Legislative Route #359; thence from said place of beginning North twenty-two (22) degrees thirty-seven (37) minutes East along land now or formerly of Henry S. Mellinger, et ux., one hundred twenty-two and seventy-three one hundredths (122.73) feet to a PK nail in the center line of said Route #400; thence North eighty-nine (89) degrees sixteen minutes East along the center line of said Route #400, thirty (30) feet to a PK nail in the center of said Route #400; thence south twenty-three (23) degrees sixteen (16) minutes West along land now or formerly of Frank Pokorny, et ux., one hundred thirty-four and seventy-one one-hundredths (134.71) feet to an iron pin at the back edge of said sidewalk; thence North sixty-seven (67) degrees twelve (12) minutes West along said sidewalk, twenty-six and four one-hundredths (26.04) feet to the place of beginning; containing eight one-hundredths (.08) of an acre.

References are to deeds filed at the Clinton County Recorder of Deeds, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

- 1892 Deed, February 24, 1892, recorded in Book 49, Page 219.  
W.B. Hanna to Lena M. Probst.
- 1904 Will, April 8, 1907, recorded in Book E, Page 145.  
Lena M. Probst to Alexander Probst.
- 1933 Deed, January 23, 1933, recorded in Book 122, Page 5.  
Jacob C. Nestlerode, Sheriff, to Flora Cluston.
- 1947 Deed, March 27, 1947, recorded in Book 164, Page 98.  
Flora Cluston to Eliza Cluston Smith.
- 1976 Deed, June 7, 1976, recorded in Book 256, Page 776.  
Eliza Cluston Smith to Michael P. Nestarick, et al.
- 1976 Deed, September 13, 1976, recorded in Book 257, Page 1092.  
Michael P. Nestarick, et al. to Clifton A. Brown.
- 1978 Deed, January 23, 1978, recorded in Book 264, Page 954.  
Clifton A. Brown to Frank D. and Susan M. Pokorney

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Alexander Probst.
5. Original plans and construction: No original plans were located for the Flora Cluston House. The house has not been severely altered.
6. Alterations and additions: According to the current owner's mother, who lives next door, the Flora Cluston House experienced a fire on the second floor, circa 1931. The extent of the damage is unknown, but it appears to have been relatively minor. On the second floor of the rear wall of the house is a doorway. However, the doorway does not have exterior access. Apparently, there was once an exterior stairway that provided access to the second floor.

#### B. Historical Context

The Flora Cluston House was built circa 1914 by Alexander Probst, a local carpenter. Probst was also responsible for building the Thomas Aikey House in 1888 (see HABS No. PA-5540). Probst's wife, Lena, purchased a lot from William B. Hanna in 1892 for \$450. Hanna inherited the land from his father, Nathaniel Hanna, in 1873. Nathaniel Hanna was responsible for subdividing and developing Lower Lockport. The Probsts subdivided the lot they purchased from Hanna and built a building on the western half, leaving the lot upon which the Flora Cluston House exists undeveloped. Lena Probst died in 1904 and the property was passed to Alexander Probst. Probst continued to reside in the initial residence and, according to the current owner, built this building as a rental property, circa 1914. The Flora Cluston House property was sold in a Sheriff's sale in 1933; Flora Cluston purchased the property. The sale was probably the result of a lawsuit brought against Probst by a Ms. Emma Gross. The nature of the lawsuit remains unclear. Little is known about Flora Cluston. For more specific information concerning later tenants, please see Vento et al, 1989: 181.

### PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

#### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Flora Cluston House is a 2 1/2-story, two-bay, brick house with a flat, sloping roof. The house is situated on a narrow lot and its form is that of an urban rowhouse.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair condition.

#### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Flora Cluston House is a 2 1/2-story, two-bay, rectangular building with a basement. The front, or south, facade measures approximately 22', and the side facade measures approximately 37'. There is a smaller, rectangular section attached to the rear of the main block that measures approximately 16' x 15'. A rear porch measures approximately 15' x 8'.
2. Foundations: The house has a rubblestone foundation with a parget treatment.
3. Walls: Brick, common bond.

4. Structural systems, framing: Balloon frame with brick cladding.
  5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The front porch extends across the width of the first story and has Tuscan columns and pilasters, a turned post balustrade, and newel posts flanking the stairway. The porch has a hipped roof with asphalt roll roofing, a finished ceiling, and wooden plank flooring. The porch cornice is elaborate, consisting of a decorative frieze, and is identical to the building cornice. Below the porch are located small awning windows. The house has a makeshift rear porch supported by two 4 x 4 posts and capped by a shed roof with tin roofing.
  6. Chimneys: A corbelled brick chimney is located on the exterior of the west facade.
  7. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: The front doorway is framed by a segmental arch. The doorway has a single sidelight with decorative stained glass. The front door's design consists of a large single light over three panels. A single-light, three-panel door is located on the second floor, rear facade.
    - b. Windows and shutters: Many of the window openings on the Flora Cluston House have segmental arches with voussoirs. The windows are one-over-one double-hung sash with wood sills. The attic-story windows, which are covered by ivy, are single pane and about half of the size of the one-over-one windows.
  8. Roof:
    - a. Shape, covering: Flat, sloping roof with asphalt roll roofing.
    - b. Cornice, eaves: The Flora Cluston House has a projecting cornice with a decorative frieze that consists of dentils and a sawtooth pattern.
    - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Floor plans: See accompanying sketch plans.
  2. Stairways: The staircase consists of a turned post balustrade that returns on the second floor hallway. The first floor newel post is bevelled and decorated with garlands and festoons. At the top of the steps are two bevelled newel posts with fluting.
  3. Flooring: Standard-width hardwood flooring.
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls and ceilings.
  5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The doorways of the Flora Cluston House have two types of stylized wooden surrounds. The majority of the surrounds have flat entablatures with a wide frieze and fluting on the sides. The other style consists of fluting with square corner elaboration. The majority of doors found throughout the house are single-leaf, four-panel solid designs. An exception to this is a closet door on the first floor which has a vertical ridged-board design. The main entrance sidelight is infilled on the interior.
  - b. Windows: All of the windows are the original one-over-one double-hung windows. Storm windows were installed circa 1977.
  6. Decorative features and trim: Original wooden baseboards and wainscoting are located in the bathroom.
  7. Hardware: Throughout the house are original door handles, locks, and escutcheons.
  8. Mechanical Equipment:
    - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: The Flora Cluston House originally had a coal furnace which was replaced by the present oil furnace. Early-twentieth-century decorative heat registers are located throughout the house.
    - b. Lighting: There is a suspended light fixture, dating from the early twentieth century, located in the dining room, consisting of four glazed glass lamps with a center brass bowl.
    - c. Plumbing: Original plumbing accessories are located in the bathroom and consist of the porcelain sink and tub. The bathroom also retains its original medicine cabinet.
  9. Original furnishings: Original wallpaper is located in the dining room and consists of a pattern of flowers and leaves in green, maroon, tan, and brown. Original wallpaper is also found in the middle bedroom on the second floor. In the former pantry, which presently serves as the laundry, are the built-in pantry cabinets.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: The house is aligned on a north-south axis with the front facade facing south, towards the north bank of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. To the west is a vacant lot and to the east is a neighboring building.
  2. Historic landscape design: The Flora Cluston House's historic landscape consisted of a general residential design with a rear yard.
  3. Outbuildings: Presently, the only outbuildings on the property are rabbit pens. A barn, located in the back yard, was razed circa 1950.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: None.
- B. Historic views: None.
- C. Interviews: Mrs. Frank Pokorney, Sr., October, 1991.
- D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

*Clinton County Legal Records.* Located at the Clinton County Courthouse, Lock Haven, PA.

Dashiell, David A. III. *Pokorney House.* Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form 035-WW-025. Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, January, 1985.

Hannegan, Susan. *General History and Description of Clinton County, Preliminary Research Report, Clinton County Historic Sites Survey, 1985-86.* Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, 1986.

Vento, Frank J., Philip T. Fitzgibbons, Scott D. Heberling, and James Herbstritt. *Phase I Inventory Investigations of Potentially Significant Prehistoric and Historic Period Cultural Resources for the Lock Haven Flood Protection Project, Clinton County, Pennsylvania.* Prepared for the Baltimore District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Vendel Enviro-Industrial Consultants, 1989.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Linn, John Blair. *History of Centre and Clinton Counties.* Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1883.

Maynard, D.G. *Historical View of Clinton County.* Lock Haven, PA: The Enterprising Printing House, 1875.

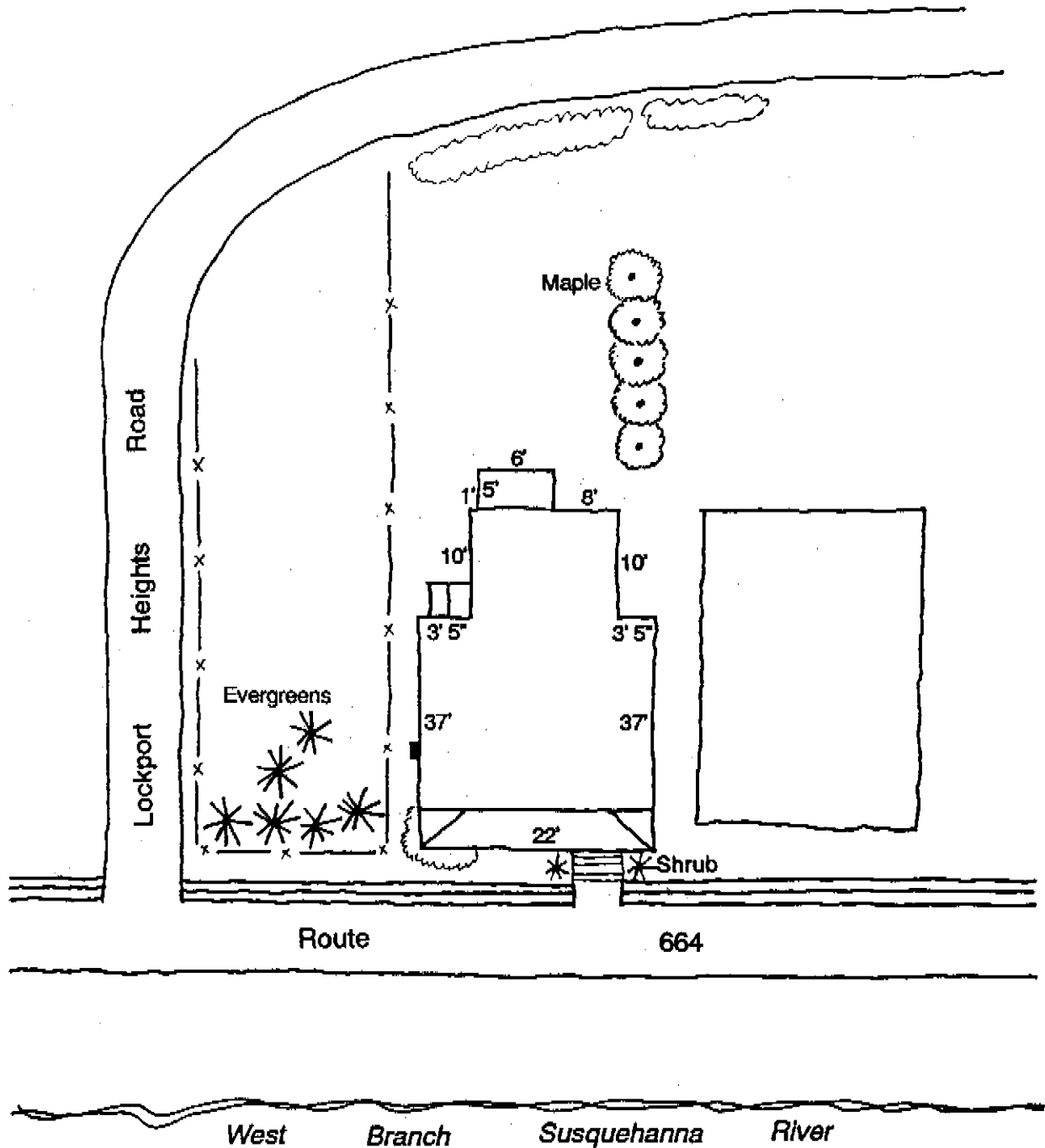
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation was undertaken in October and November 1991 in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and the Lock Haven Area Flood Protection Authority. The documentation serves as a mitigative measure for the treatment of historic properties that were identified and evaluated in a series of studies and that would be affected by the proposed Lock Haven flood protection project. The Flora Cluston House is slated for removal to accommodate an induced flooding zone. The house will be marketed for sale in an attempt to have it removed from the property. If the house cannot be sold, it will be marketed for architectural salvage. The last recourse for the house is demolition. Documentation was prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, by the Historic Preservation Group of Kise Franks & Straw, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: M. Todd Cleveland, project manager; Susan C. Nabors, historian;

**FLORA CLUSTON HOUSE  
HABS No. PA- 5533 (Page 7)**

**Martin B. Abbot, historian; and Jill Cremer, graphics. Robert Tucher provided the documentary photographs.**

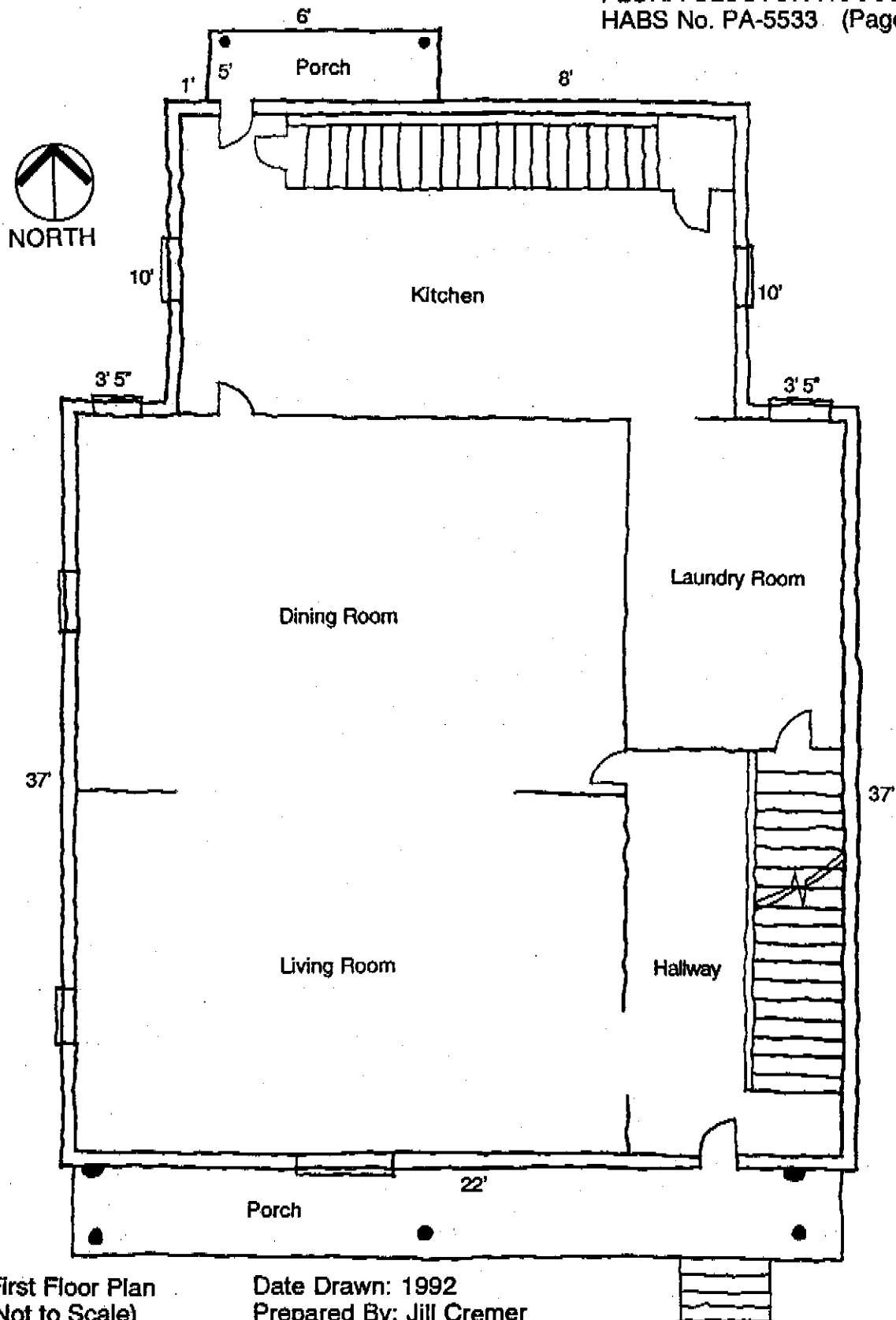




Site Plan  
(Not to Scale)

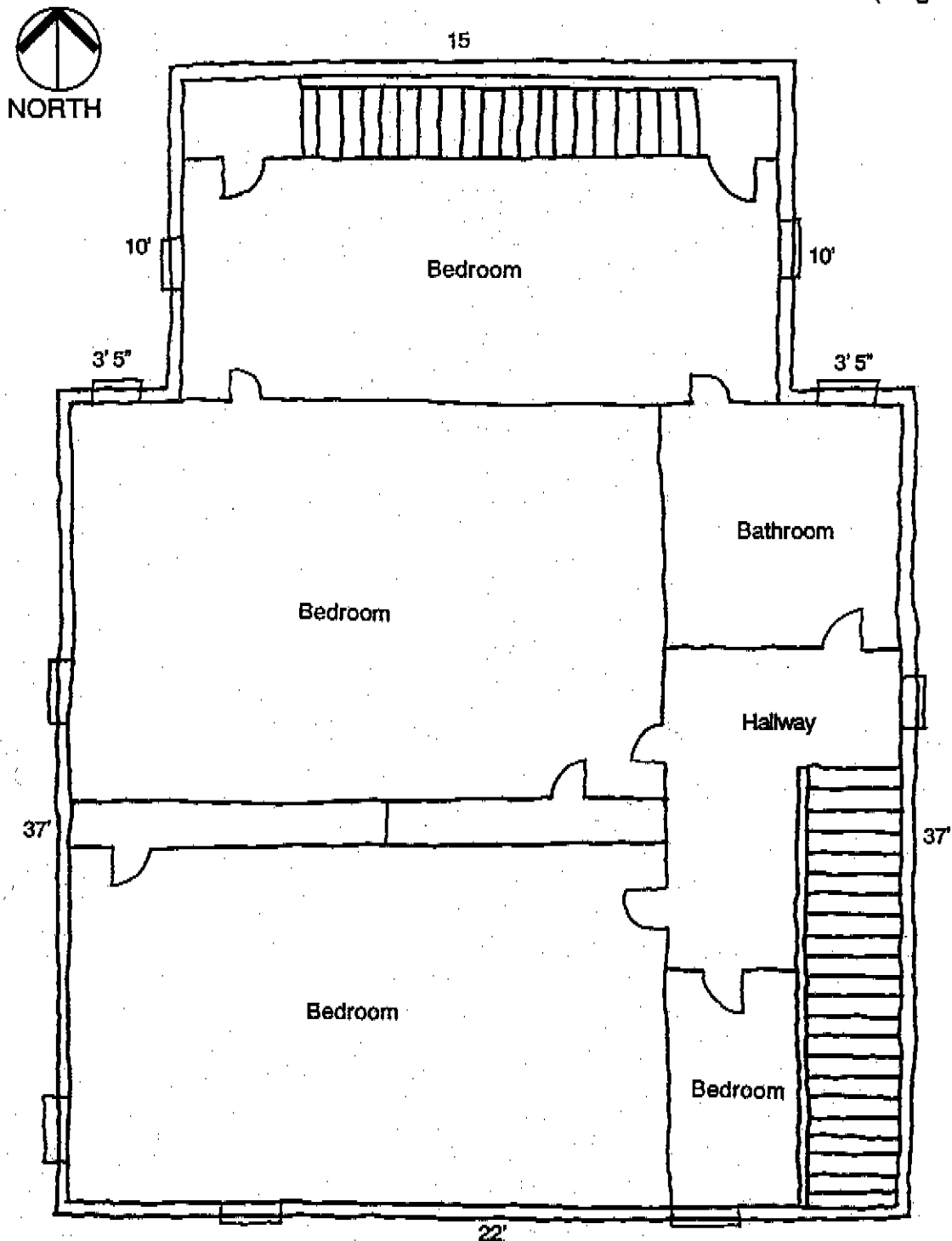
Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

FLORA CLUSTON HOUSE  
HABS No. PA-5533 (Page 9)



First Floor Plan  
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer



Second Floor Plan  
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer